If I demand, before this royal view,
What rub, or what impediment, there is,
Why that the naked, poor, and mangled peace-*
Dear nurse of arts, plenties, and joyful births,
Should not, in this best garden of the world,
Our fertile France, put up her lovely visage ?
Alas ! she hath from France too long been chas'd;
And all her husbandry doth lie on heaps,
Corrupting in its own fertility*
Her vine, the merry cheerer of the heart,
Unpruned dies [8]: her hedges even-pleached*
Like prisoners wildly over-grown with hair[9],

[8] Unpruned DIES :] We must read, *lies;* for neglect of pruning does not kill the vine, but causes it to ramify immoderately, and grow wild: by which the requisite nourishment is withdrawn from its fruit. WARBURTON.

This emendation is physically right, but poetically the vine may be well enough said to die, which ceases to bear fruit.

JOHNSON.

$ —her hedges even-pleached,—

Like prisoners wildly over-grown with hair, &c.] This image of prisoners is oddly introduced. A "hedge even-pleached" is more properly imprisoned than when it luxuriates in unpruned exuberance. JOHNSON.

Johnson's criticism on this passage has no just foundation. The King compares the disorderly shoots of an undipped hedge, to the hair and beard of a prisoner, which he has neglected to trim: a neglect natural to a person who lives alone, and in a dejected state of mind. M. MASON.

The learned commentator [Dr. Johnson] misapprehended, I believe, our author's sentiment. Hedges are pleached, that is, their long branches being cut off are twisted and woven through the lower part of the hedge, in order to thicken and strengthen the fence. The following year, when the hedge shoots out, it is customary, in many places, to clip the shoots, so as to render them even. The Duke of Burgundy, therefore, among other instances of the neglect of husbandry, mentions this : that the hedges, which *were* even-pleached, for want of

trimming, put
forth irregular twigs; like prisoners, who, in their confinement
have neglected the use of the razor, and in consequence are
wildly overgrown with hair. The hedge, in its cultivated state,
when it is *even-pleached*, is compared to the prisoner: in its